

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. OR095-03-05
Construction of metal and pole building for storage of native straw.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

The Eugene District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages public land in Township 20 South, Range 5 West, Section 15 known as the Tyrrell Seed Orchard. The area considered for construction is within the Tyrrell Seed Orchard. The construction site has been used as a gravel storage area. For the past three years, this site has been used as temporary storage for native straw.

B. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide permanent storage of native straw. Permanent storage of native straw is a necessity for the amount of straw the District is acquiring. The only supply for native straw is purchased from contractors that are growing Eugene District native seed for increase. These contracts are not on-going and limited to funding availability. With the limited sources for purchasing native straw, long term storage is needed to ensure that the straw is protected from the environment.

C. CONFORMANCE WITH LAND USE PLAN

The Proposed Action and alternative are in conformance with the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP, 1995) as amended by the *Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (S&M ROD, USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management, January 2001).

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

A. PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action would be to construct a three-sided, metal and pole building. The dimensions are: twenty feet (wide) by sixty feet (length) with twelve foot sidewalls. The location for construction is within the Tyrrell Seed Orchard, adjacent to road # 20-5-15. It is located at the junction of roads 20-5-15-, 20-5-15.1 and 20-5-16. The site has been used for storage of gravel for maintenance of the seed orchard road system. No merchantable trees are proposed for cutting, although some brush and sapling clearing would be required for construction and site preparation. Construction of the building described above would take approximately two weeks. See attached map for specific

location of the construction that would occur under the Proposed Action.

B. ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)

This alternative would not allow for construction of the straw storage building. The straw would be stored with temporary cover.

III. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED

Several locations for construction sites were considered, but were found to be infeasible. The administrative site at Tyrrell Seed Orchard was considered. There is insufficient space at the site and would require removal of some portion of a breeding and production orchard. Straw has the potential to provide habitat for small rodents. The Tyrrell Seed Orchard collects and dries cones for the cooperators. There is potential for damage and loss to cones with rodent habitat adjacent to the cone storage area. The West Eugene Wetlands was considered, but again space is limited. Access to the West Eugene Wetlands is open from the bicycle path adjacent to the office. This provides potential for vandalism to the stored straw. The Triangle Lake and Walton Maintenance shops (no longer operational) were considered, but the location is not central to the District and potential for vandalism is high.

IV. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Tyrrell Seed Orchard lies within the Upper Siuslaw fifth field watershed, approximately two miles west of the community of Lorane. Tyrrell Seed Orchard incorporates several sections of public land, Township 20 South, Range 5 West, Section 9, Section 15 and Section 21. The orchard has an administrative site in Township 20 South, Range 5 West, Section 21. The other land is for cone production and scion collection. Some of the land is used for small plots for native grass production and genetic common garden studies for native grasses. The construction site is within a cone production orchard and adjacent to a two year-old Douglas fir progeny site.

Vegetation

The Tyrrell Seed Orchard has several different areas in various stages of development. Each of these areas have associated vegetation. The first phase production orchards have spaced rows of Douglas fir with planted orchard grass between the rows. The second phase areas of the production orchards have no trees and are planted with orchard grass. The areas where mowing equipment cannot be used have the over-story of conifers removed and native and non-native shrubs and forbs are present. There has been some planting of conifers of different species in these areas. Those species include Ponderosa pine, Western Red cedar, Sequoia, and Noble fir.

Scotch broom, a noxious weed and aggressive colonizer of disturbed ground with open canopies, has become established along the fence lines and access roads. Himalayan blackberry, a noxious weed is present in areas where no mowing occurs.

Wildlife

Northern Spotted Owl. There are no known spotted owl sites within a mile of the project. No habitat would be removed during construction. There would be no possible disturbance to spotted owls as the closest stand of spotted owl habitat is over a quarter mile away. The construction of a pole building would not affect northern spotted owls.

Marbled Murrelet. There are no known marbled murrelet sites within ten miles of the project. No habitat would be removed during construction. There would be no possible disturbance to marbled murrelets as the closest stand of murrelet habitat is over a quarter mile away. The construction of a pole building would not affect marbled murrelets.

Survey and Manage Species. Construction would take place on an old gravel storage area at the junction of two roads. All of the native vegetation is gone. Neither red tree voles nor Oregon meadowlark (*Megomphix hemphilli*) would be affected by the construction because there is no habitat for them presently at the construction site. (*Pristoloma artium crateris* would not be affected because the seed orchard is located outside of their range; they live in the higher elevations of the Cascades Mountains.)

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. UNAFFECTED RESOURCES

The following resources are either not present or would not be affected by any of the alternatives: threatened or endangered species, surface and groundwater quality, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, prime or unique farmlands, floodplains, Native American religious concerns, solid or hazardous wastes, Wild and Scenic Rivers, cultural resources, Wilderness, minority populations, and low income populations.

B. DIRECT, INDIRECT, AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The Proposed Action and No Action alternative would have environmental effects. However, neither of the alternatives would have effects beyond those described in the RMP EIS. This analysis also incorporates by reference the analysis of cumulative effects in the RMP EIS (Chapter 4). The following section supplements that analysis, providing site-specific information and analysis particular to the alternatives considered here.

1. Proposed Action

Vegetation. The Proposed Action would destroy a minimal amount of vegetation. Some of the planted Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir saplings would need to be removed for construction of the building. Some Himalayan blackberry would be removed also. There is no other vegetation within the construction area. A vascular plant survey occurred in 1999 and no Threatened and Endangered species were found. The construction site is not habitat for Survey and Manage species.

Wildlife. Neither northern spotted owls nor marbled murrelets would be affected by the proposed action. No Survey and Manage terrestrial species would be affected by the proposed action.

2. No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no building would be constructed. There would be damage to the existing inventory of native straw because all of the temporary shelter methods have not been sufficient. Existing vegetation and wildlife resource would be unaffected.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

A. LIST OF PREPARERS

The Proposed Action and alternatives were analyzed by the following interdisciplinary team of BLM specialists:

Alison Center	Wildlife Biologist
Chuck Fairchild	Botanist
Jeff Apel	Engineering (Roads)
Glenn Miller	Seed Orchard Manager
Rick Colvin	Landscape Planner

B. CONSULTATION

Consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service is not required, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, because the Proposed Action and the alternative would have no effect on any listed species.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A public notice announcing the availability of this EA and preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will appear in the Eugene Register-Guard on November 13, 2002. Copies will be mailed to any parties that request it.

VI. REFERENCES

USDI Bureau of Land Management. November 1994. Eugene District Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP EIS). Eugene, Oregon: Eugene District Office.

USDI Bureau of Land Management. June 1995. Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP). Eugene, Oregon: Eugene District Office.

